Vol. VII. Numb. 49

THE OBSERVATOR.

Remarks on the Advantage gain'd over the Spaniſh *Galleons in the* Weſt Indies, *by Commodore* Wager, *the 21ſt of* May *laſt; with the good Conſequences that may attend the Purſuit of it. On the Poſture of Affairs in* Flanders.

From Saturday, July 31. to Wednesday, Auguſt 4. 1708.

Country-m. I Bring you good News, Maſter; a Fighting-Story from Sea.

Obſ. I am very glad to hear it, *Roger*; I would not have our Military Glory quite ſunk by Sea, while it riſes ſo high by Land; for being Iſlanders, the Sea is our proper Element, and ought not to be the leaſt Object of our Care. But pray tell me the Particulars?

Country-m. The Paper publiſh'd by Authority, Maſter, ſays, 'That on the 1ſt Inſtant in the Afternoon, an Expreſs arriv'd from Col. *Handaſyd*, 'Governor of *Jamaica*, dated *June* 17. with the 'following Advices, *viz.* That Commodore *Wager*, 'in her Majeſty's Ship the *Expedition*, with the '*Kingſton*, *Portland*, and a Fire-ſhip, fell in with 'the *Spaniſh* Galleons, and other Veſſels, being 14 'in all, between the *Brew* and *Friends* Iſlands, when 'the Commodore engag'd the *Spaniſh* Admiral, 'who, after an Hour's Diſpute, blew up, and of '7 or 800 Men he had on Board, not above 17 'were ſav'd; then he came up with the Rear-Admiral, and after three Hours Engagement, took 'him; the Commodore having loſt 14 Men, and 'the Galleon 90. Her Majeſty's Ship, the *Kingſton*, 'engag'd the Vice-Admiral, who got among ſome 'Shoals, which the *Kingſton* being afraid of running upon, the Galleon made her Eſcape into '*Carthagena*. Next Morning they ſpy'd another 'Galleon, which, as they gave her Chaſe, run a-'ſhore, where the *Spaniards* blew up her Stern, and 'left her. The Expreſs left Commodore *Wager* re-'fitting the Galleon he took, as well as his own 'Ship, deſigning, when he had done, to come di-'rectly into Port. The other two Men of War 'were left cruiſing off of *Carthagena*, endeavouring 'to get what they could from the Galleon that run 'aſhore. The Expreſs adds, that 'twas believ'd, 'M. *du Caſſe*, as ſoon as he heard the News, would 'not ſtay any longer, but make the beſt of his Way 'to *France*: That all poſſible Care would be taken 'to prevent thoſe Veſſels coming out of *Carthagena*, 'which were deſign'd to join M. *du Caſſe*. All our 'Privateers are order'd to cruiſe off that Port, and 'the *Havana*: And the Priſoners ſay, that there 'was a vaſt Quantity of Plate on Board the three 'Galleons that are taken and deſtroy'd.

Obſ. A very good Story indeed, *Roger*; that's a Wound to the *French* King in the moſt ſenſible Part; 'tis ſo much Money loſt to the Enemy, and ſo much gain'd by us; ſo that it affects him doubly, beſides the Diſrepute it brings to his Affairs. It was ever my Opinion, *Roger*, that a Naval War well manag'd in the *Weſt Indies*, would be the moſt effectual and ſpeedy Way of recovering the *Spaniſh* Monarchy out of the Hands of the Houſe of *Bourbon*; for if we could once be Maſters of the *French* King's Purſe, he muſt of Courſe drop his Sword. It would ſoon convince the *Spaniards*, that he is not able to cope with the Allies, nor to give the Duke of *Anjou*'s Party that Protection which encourag'd them to betray the *Spaniſh* Dominions into his Hands: And as it would make them forward to return to the Obedience of King *Charles*, in Order to attone for their Treachery and Diſloyalty to the Houſe of *Auſtria*, and the fundamental Maxims of their own Government, it would be the beſt and ſpeedieſt Way for us to retrieve our Trade, in which we have ſuffer'd ſo much by a tedious and expenſive War; and likewiſe to enable us to make a due Advantage of the Treaty of Alliance, by which we are allow'd to retain whatever we take in the *Weſt Indies*, which is but a very reaſonable Article; for without our Aſſiſtance, the Houſe of *Auſtria* muſt have loſt the Whole. Beſides, the Benefit they are like to reap from our Trade in ſuch a Caſe, will make them a double Compenſation.

Country-m. I have frequently heard the ſame, Maſter, from ſome of our moſt eminent Traders; which makes me to wonder ſo much the more, how it came to be ſo long neglected; but better late, than never. In the mean Time, Maſter, I wiſh Commodore *Wager* had been ſtronger; then in all Probability all the Enemies Ships muſt have fallen into our Hands.

Obſ. We ought to bleſs God, and be content, *Roger*; he knows what is beſt for us; tho' Inſtruments are not excuſeable for their Neglect. Had a good Peace been ſoon obtain'd, we ſhould have been apt to undervalue it; and had the Hand of Man been very diſcernible in the Advantages we have had by Sea and Land, we ſhould, according to the Cuſtom of Men, have been ready to *ſacrifice to our own Net, and burn Incenſe to our own Drag*. But the Hand of God was ſo viſible in bringing about the late happy Revolution, and has been ſo remarkably ſeen in continuing to us the Benefits of it, that every Man, who is capable of Obſervation, muſt own, that God has in a Manner ſav'd us againſt our own Wills, and in Spite of abundance of ill Conduct, which was occaſion'd by the Treachery of ſome, and the Neglect or Self-ſeeking Humour of others, who on both Sides have ſtudy'd their own Intereſt, and that of their Party, more than the Honour of the Government, or the Welfare of the Nation. At the ſame Time, we muſt not deny Inſtruments their Due, *Roger*. Her Majeſty and her two Houſes of Parliament, by their Unanimity in purſuing the common Advantage, have given us a happy Proſpect of retrieving our Affairs; therefore all that you and I can do, is, to give the beſt Hints we are capable of, and to join with all honeſt Men in our Prayers, that God would continue to bleſs her Majeſty with good Parliaments, faithful Counſellors, able Miniſters, victorious Armies, and ſucceſsful Fleets, in Order to the Recovery of the common Liberty of *Europe*, the Preſervation of our own Conſtitution, and the perpetuating of the Proteſtant Succeſſion, as by Law eſtabliſh'd.

Country-m. I give my hearty Amen to that Prayer, Maſter; and in Order to fit us for thoſe valuable Bleſſings, ſhall add one Petition more; which is, that we may teſtify our Gratitude to the Almighty, by a National Reformation of the Contempt and Neglect of reveal'd Religion, and of the Diſſolution of Manners, which abound ſo much among us, leaſt God be provok'd to turn our Joy into Mourning, and to humble us as he has done our Enemies.

Obſ. You ſay very well, *Roger*. But have you any farther Particulars of this great Action in the *Weſt Indies*?

Country-m.

Country-m. The other Prints say, Master, that the Galleon taken, has at least two Millions Sterling on Board; that there are 16 *French* Marquisses and *Spanish* Dons among the Prisoners, who had all a vast Treasure on Board; that the Rear-Admiral, whose Ship we took, had 40000 *l.* of his own on Board; and that every one of our common Sailors will have a great Sum for their Share. They add, that our *Jamaica* Privateers had, before this Action, taken six rich *Spanish* Ships, and sold the Goods on Board for 40000 *l.* besides a *French* Prize taken, with Goods for the Coast Trade; which they hope will make Trade brisk, fill the Island with Money, and be attended with many happy Consequences there, as well as here.

Obs. 'Tis a very glorious Beginning of our *West India* Expeditions, *Roger*; and I hope the Advantage will be improv'd, to the Benefit both of the Government and Subject. By this we may see, that our noble Patriots, the Lords, were perfectly in the Right, to address her Majesty, that a Squadron should always be kept in the *West Indies*, capable of protecting our own Trade there, and of annoying that of the Enemy. It likewise shews the Wisdom of both Houses in their Act last Session, for encouraging Privateers, *&c.* and I hope this great Success, will animate our Merchants, and other Adventurers, to farther Undertakings for annoying the Enemy, and enlarging our Trade both in the *North* and *South Seas*. But what News have you from *Flanders, Roger?*

Country-m. Why truly, Master, the Improvement of our late Victory there, has hitherto been retarded by the Want of our heavy Cannon, *&c.* but now Prince *Eugene* is march'd with it to our Great Army, under a Convoy of 40000 Men; and the *French*, for all their Bravado's, have not been able to attack him. In the mean Time, it must be own'd, that their taking of *Ghent* and *Bruges*, has been a vast Disadvantage to us, and of great Advantage to them; for it not only sav'd their Army from being totally destroy'd, but has hitherto delay'd the getting up of our heavy Artillery, enabl'd them to ravage Part of *Dutch Flanders*, and put it under Contribution, and has given them Time to recover from their Consternation; yet, Thanks to God, it has been a dear Purchase to them, since their Success in that Attempt made them so careless, as to give us an Opportunity of engaging and routing them, which in all Probability they might have otherwise avoided; and besides the Loss of the Battel, and the Mortification the *French* King has had to see his Grandsons baffl'd in their first Campaign, we have demolish'd the Lines which he had erected at so much Expence, for Defence of his Country, where we have rais'd prodigious Sums of Money, and convinc'd the Slaves, his Subjects, that their Idol, to whom they have given Titles of Blasphemy, is neither Infallible nor Invincible: And we have Reason to hope, Master, if we and our Allies be all honest and faithful to our Selves, and the common Cause, that he may have yet a more fatal Blow in *Flanders*, and elsewhere too, before the Campaign be over, tho' the Season is far advanc'd.

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